

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1 - 15. (Canceled)

16. (Currently Amended) An automatic analyzer ~~comprising~~ for use with at least one reagent bottle having ~~an~~ at least one opening for extracting a reagent contained therein, said opening being closed by a puncturable seal member for sealing a reagent from outside atmosphere, said analyzer comprising:

a reagent extracting and dispensing mechanism having a reagent probe with a nozzle for extracting and dispensing a reagent in said reagent bottle through said opening of said reagent bottle;

a reaction cell in which a sample to be analyzed is mixed with said reagent extracted and dispensed from said reagent bottle;

measuring means for measuring a reaction between said sample and said reagent extracted and dispensed from said reagent bottle;

a seal piercing tool to be attached to said nozzle for piercing the puncturable seal member, said piercing tool being removable from said nozzle, said piercing tool having a hollow interior into which said nozzle is inserted from one end of said piercing tool, an opposite end of said piercing tool being a pointed needle having no opening therein, and

a container for holding said piercing tool before said piercing tool is attached to said nozzle, and for holding said piercing tool after said piercing tool is removed from said nozzle,

wherein said piercing tool comprises a lever locking said piercing tool to said nozzle when said nozzle is inserted therein to prevent said piercing tool from slipping off from said nozzle, said lever being unlocked from said nozzle to remove said piercing tool from said nozzle.

17. (Previously Presented) An automatic analyzer according to claim 16, further comprising a reagent sampling mechanism for moving said nozzle downwardly to insert said nozzle into said piercing tool to be locked therein with said lever, for moving said nozzle upwardly to remove said nozzle with said piercing tool locked thereto from said container, for inserting said nozzle with said piercing tool locked thereto back into said container and for moving said nozzle upwardly to move said lever, to unlock said lever from said nozzle.

18. (Previously Presented) An automatic analyzer according to claim 16, further comprising;

a rotatable reagent disk on which a plurality of reagent bottles are arranged along a circumference of said disk; and

a reagent sampling mechanism for moving said nozzle with said piercing tool locked thereto to a reagent dispensing position of said reagent disk, and moving said nozzle with said piercing tool locked thereto downwardly to pierce a seal

of each said reagent bottles, respectively when each said reagent bottle is moved underneath said piercing tool by rotating said reagent disk.

19. (Previously Presented) An automatic analyzer according to claim 16, further comprising;

a reagent sampling mechanism for moving said nozzle,
wherein said at least one reagent bottle has a plurality of openings,
with each of said openings closed by a puncturable seal and said openings, said container, and a reagent dispensing position to dispense a reagent into said reaction cell are arranged so as to lie on a straight line, and said reagent sampling mechanism moves said nozzle along said straight line.

20. (Previously Presented) An automatic analyzer according to claim 16, further comprising a reagent sampling mechanism for moving said nozzle downwardly to insert said nozzle into said piercing tool to be locked therein with said lever, for moving said nozzle upwardly to remove said nozzle with said piercing tool locked thereto from said container, for moving said nozzle with said piercing tool locked thereto laterally, for inserting said nozzle with said piercing tool locked thereto into said container, and for moving said nozzle with said piercing tool locked thereto upwardly to move said lever to unlock said lever from said nozzle.

21. (Currently Amended) An automatic analyzer according to claim 16, wherein said piercing tool has a slidable guide tube thereon and said seal of said at least one reagent bottle has a recess therein to be engaged with said slidable guide tube for positioning a ~~top~~ said opposite end of said piercing tool accurately relative to said reagent bottle.